7 Tips On How to Pass As Masculine For Trans Men

By **Jamal Siddiqui** - August 9, 2017 10749 0

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Being a pre-operated trans man is exhausting. Most of the time people don't acknowledge your gender, you do not look your age (like a teenage boy), people misgender you by saying, "*Oh sorry ma'am I thought you are a boy*", and gender dysphoria haunts.

Here are few tips with which you can pass as a male and decrease your dysphoria:

1. Identify where your dysphoria lies: Identify what are the things that give you this distress and dysphoria. Is it the 'feminine' clothes, the haircut, the way people treat you, your body (Chest, what you have in your pants, feminine skin, no or lack of facial hair)? Do not get traumatised and by identifying your dysphoria you can work around it to make things a little better.

2. Getting a Masculine Haircut: Getting a simple masculine haircut can be both relieving and a struggling experience. It sometimes takes a lot of courage to do it. "*What will parents, society, friends, colleagues or relatives say*" is the most daunting thought. Trust me once you do it, it is the most relieving experience. Go to a salon or your barber, ask for a masculine haircut which you like. Many hairstylist or barber may ask many weird questions. "*Aap baal kyu chhote kara rhe ho" (Why are you cutting your hair short), "Ladkiyo ke toh baal bade hote hai" (Girls should have long hair), "Trim kardu kya" (Should I trim?), "Arre koi khass occasion hai kya" (Is there a special occasion?), "Shaadi kaun karega aise aapse" (Who will marry you?)* and they try to lure you with all their products which are especially for women. If your hairstylist says all these, tell them to just do their job or change the stylist. Also note, that there is a difference between short masculine and short feminine haircut.

3. Masculine clothes: Choosing masculine clothes from a store can make you nervous, happy or anxious. Understanding your body and what suits you are very important. I have a read a very **good article** about FTM masculine clothing.

4. Using a Binder: Chest binding is a way to decrease down the dysphoria for many trans men. Binding, basically, means to use various ways and materials to make your chest area flatten, hence giving you a male-looking chest. It is cheap to use household items however, some are quite unsafe. For instance, duct tape and crepe bandage are not good because they damage the breast tissues and ribs. When I didn't have a binder I used a *dupatta*, cut old jeans to wrap around the chest area, old smaller size t-shirts. They are all good, but not reliable. Then I tried jockey's different sports bra of small size and also tried this **Binder Tank Top**. I stitched the sports bra to the size in which I felt comfortable and it gave me more compression. I was not happy so I looked for a really good budget binder. There are many websites where you can find **binders**:

- **Underworks.com** has some really good binders, but they are a little expensive.
- **Amazon.in** also has binders of Underworks.
- Aliexpress.com
- GC2B.com

Apart from these online websites there is a company called Norma which make customized compression belt. My binder is from Norma and I paid INR 2300 for one piece. Apart from these things there are 3 more options

- Shapewear
- Layering
- **How To Make Your Own Binder** (credits: **The Indian Transman**)

There some things you need to keep in mind while using a binder. Don't wear a binder for more than 8-9 hours, wash it regularly and keep it clean. Binders may cause breathing problem for some. Do not sleep wearing a binder as it may be harmful. Also, there are many trans men who give their second-hand binders at low cost.

For more information, you can check out this **link**.

5. Packing: Packing means creating a male-looking or male feeling bulge in your crotch area. It can be done by using a home made stuffer or a store-bought stuffer. There are realistic looking prosthetic devices which can be found online. It is also referred to as 'packer', 'packy' or as 'Stand to pee packer' which allows one to pee while standing up. Some trans men prefer to call their packer or device as penis, cock, dick etc. You can use socks, I have used it though it was not very comfortable but gives good bulge. For more information check out this **link.** You can buy packers **here**.

6. Voice: The major problem with many pre-op trans men or FTM is their feminine voice and their appearance as many look like teenage boys. If you are happy with it, then its fine. However, if this makes you feel dysphoric, then you can practice to make your voice masculine. Stand in front of the mirror and practice with little words and sentences. For looks you can join gym to gain muscles. You can try using dried kohl (kajal) to give a '5 o clock shadow' look.

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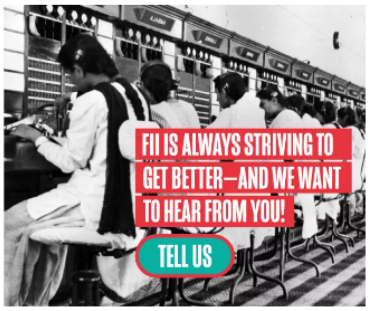

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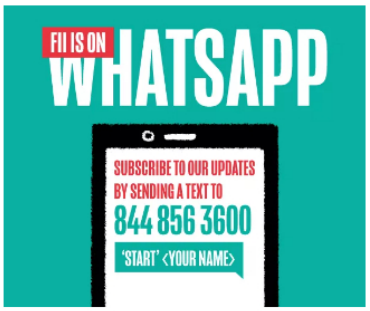

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7. Masculine Manners: Learn how men around you or in your society behave. Do not get pressurized by that though. Observe them, take your time, analyse and then accept. Learning masculine manners can be tricky as sometimes we get so indulged in learning them that we cross the line and become sexist and disrespect other genders which is not acceptable.

And here are few links which you can go through for more passing Tips

1. **How to Dress Like A Guy**
2. **FTM Passing Tips**
3. **FTM Resource Guide**

These are few tips for passing as a male and they are based on my experience. Any reader who wants to contribute or add anything in this article please feel free to contact or email me.

Also read: **Young and Trans In Pakistan: A Trans Man's Coming Out Story**

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Jamal Siddiqui

Jamal is a Muslim trans man, believes in queer feminism, animal lover, YouTuber and has a blog about his transition.

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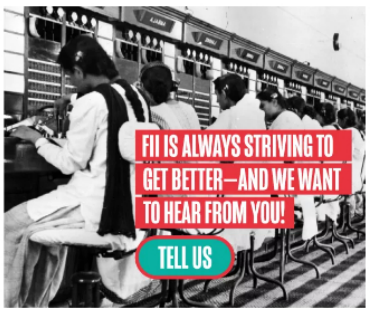

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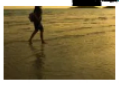

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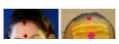

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